

omnibus bills at the end and all of the things that happen.

It has been 20 years since we passed a budget on time. We haven't had a real budget at all, even a late one, since 2016—not even a late one since 2016. We haven't had a real budget in 20 years. I don't know how everybody else does it, but I can tell you, if you are out of sync that bad, you had better sit down and work something out. Last year, neither the House nor the Senate Budget Committee even bothered to pass a budget out of committee. Neither even bothered to do one. It is unbelievable.

If you are listening at home and this sounds absolutely pathetic and crazy, that is because it is. No one is holding our feet to the fire. We aren't holding our own feet to the fire. It is unacceptable that we run the single largest economic entity in the universe without having a budget in place.

Let me tell you: Any household and any business that does not recognize what their income and outgo is will not be in business long. You are not going to be profitable. You will probably be bankrupt as an individual. With 21 years of running deficits as an individual, you can't do it, and as a business, you can't do it.

Nobody in this type of an economy and this type of structure of a government can operate and survive. As a Governor, I used to hold weekly—and Governors are responsible because, I think, there are 46 or 48 States that have a balanced budget amendment. That means we, as the chief executive officers in our States, are responsible for balancing the budgets. We would sit down every week like clockwork. My financial people would come to my office every Tuesday afternoon. It was baked in every Tuesday. We would sit down and go over any adjustments that might need to be made, and we would make them. When the financial crisis hit in 2008 and 2009, we were doing it sometimes twice a day to stay ahead of the curve—by not falling into the trap of having a deficit. We had to make tough cuts. We lived with it, and West Virginians came through it, and we were better off financially than we ever were before because we stayed ahead of the curve. Now as a U.S. Senator, I am embarrassed to say that not only are we not living within our means, we don't even want to discuss it and talk about it, what the problems may be. We need to stop digging our heels in and work out our differences.

When it comes to dealing with and controlling our spending and lifting the debt ceiling, at least we can talk about it. At least we can agree that we have a problem. At least we can basically maybe come together and find out how did we get to where we got to so quickly. We need to put all of our ideas on the table, just like we did last year with a number of important, bipartisan bills, so that we can pass and we can agree on bipartisan legislation and create long-lasting fiscal accountability.

Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, Senator MITCH MCCONNELL, Congressperson

KEVIN MCCARTHY, and Congressperson HAKEEM JEFFRIES—they need to propose a budget, allow for debate and discussion, and put it up for a vote. This needs to happen.

The debt ceiling clock is ticking. We can't afford to wait any longer. We need to serve as true fiduciaries for our country. That is what we are here to do.

The projections are that in a few short years, the national debt, as a share of the economy, will be the highest it has ever been in the history of this country. The debt will exceed—will exceed—the prior record of 106 percent of GDP, which we set after World War II.

Think about when we had the highest debt ever until now—the highest debt—and what happened to cause that debt. The United States of America entered war on all fronts. We saved the world from fascism. We basically helped rebuild Europe. We have something to show for that. What do we have to show for it now? What do we truly have to show for the debt we have incurred right now?

Most everyone uses 2050 as a benchmark. I hear 2050 in so many scenarios for accomplishments in different arenas. Pick whatever you have heard about 2050 that you may fit in, but 2050 has been the high-water mark. But I want to tell you what happens. If we continue down the path that we are on, we will have accumulated by 2050 nearly \$130 trillion of public debt. We are at \$1.46 right now—\$130 trillion. Just to service the interest on the debt—just to service the interest on the debt—will be \$5 trillion a year. This is by CBO; this is not me or anybody else coming up and trying to scare the bejesus out of you. This is what these young Americans are going to be facing with their children and grandchildren by 2050.

Not only that someone can tell me that this could even be plausible, but think about everyone here. Think about everyone in this great body. Think about your family. Think about your constituents. Our national debt weakens our economy, it weakens our national security, it weakens the trust Americans have in their government, and it weakens our role in the world. It weakens our role in the world.

I tell you, my grandfather, again, Papa said: Unmanaged debt—which we have a runaway train right now—unmanaged debt will make cowardly decisions. You will make cowardly decisions.

Fortunately, we still have time this year to prevent the catastrophic financial forecast.

I am asking all of you to join me in calling for, first, an honest budget without accounting gimmicks and tricks; second, a short-term deal to bring down our out-of-control spending right now, this year; and a plan to deal with our longer term fiscal challenges. The commonsense approach offers the accountability Americans want, the re-

sponsibility approach that we need, and the results we deserve.

My constituents have begun to ask me: How serious a crisis could we face if we continue to ignore our Nation's debt?

I think I have laid out the seriousness of our financial situation if we continue down the path we are on.

From President Washington, our Founding Father, 227 years ago to a more modern-day warning from our then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2011, ADM Mike Mullen, at my first Armed Services meeting—he was testifying before the Senate Armed Services. He was asked the question: What is the greatest threat our Nation faces? We thought it was going to be China, Russia, whatever it may be. Without skipping a beat, without missing a word, he said that the debt of our Nation is the greatest, greatest threat we face—the debt of our Nation. Just like the warning of our Founding Father in his Farewell Address, those words are even truer today than they were then.

If you love your children, if you love this country, you will stop the madness and start acting reasonably and responsibly to get our government's financial house in order. It is long past due. The partisan politics can wait. There is always time to have arguments and disagreements, but the looming debt crisis cannot—it cannot—basically have the disruption that we have and the discourse and the political toxic atmosphere that we have here. We have got to come together for the sake of our great country.

As I close, I want to say may God bless—which He has blessed—this great country and by all means help the United States of America to be even better than what we are today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, during my time in the Senate and even prior, when I had the honor of serving as Texas attorney general, I spent a lot of time in our border communities working with the mayors, county judges, private land owners, nongovernmental organizations, and law enforcement at every level. The majority of these men and women have lived along the Texas-Mexico border for their entire lives. They have witnessed the impact of policies from Washington from different administrations. They have seen spikes and dips in migration. They have reaped the benefits of legitimate trade and commerce, and they have dealt with the consequences of security failures. In short, they have seen a lot. But virtually everyone agrees that they have never seen anything like President Biden's present border crisis.

Over the first 2 years of the Biden administration, we have broken one record after another when it comes to migration. Here are some shocking statistics. U.S. Customs and Border Protection logged nearly 2.4 million border

crossings during a single year. During 1 month alone, the Agency encountered more than a quarter of a million migrants.

The scope and scale of this crisis is absolutely unprecedented, and it is having a major impact on our border security missions. When highly trained and professional Border Patrol agents are spending their time passing out meals and doing administrative tasks, they aren't able to do what they train for, what they want to do, which is to stop drugs like fentanyl, which killed more than 70,000 Americans last year alone.

I was able to meet with some parents who lost their teenage children to fentanyl poisoning last week in Hays County school district right outside of Austin, TX. It was among the most emotional events I have ever attended, because these parents had happy, healthy teenage children going to high school, who took something they thought was a relatively innocuous pill, only to find out it was contaminated with a minute amount of fentanyl, and it took their lives. These parents want us to stop the flow of these drugs across the southwestern border.

When the Border Patrol is not on the frontlines, they are not able to stop the transnational criminals, the cartel members, or other people on the terrorist watch list from sneaking into the United States.

A few weeks ago, I traveled with a bipartisan delegation of Senators to El Paso and then to Yuma—Yuma, AZ, a southwestern part of Arizona—a sleepy, little agricultural community. The Border Patrol Sector Chief told us that they encountered people speaking as many as 200 languages from 176 different countries at that little, sleepy border community in southwestern Arizona.

As it turns out, there is a major airport in Mexicali, in northern Mexico, just across from Yuma, and people were literally flying there from around the world and turning up at the Border Patrol sector and claiming asylum, people from 176 different countries. These are people who are exploiting the vulnerabilities in our asylum system—something we can and we should fix, but so far, there has been no cooperation in order to fix our broken asylum system.

Over the years, I have had the pleasure of taking a number of colleagues to the Texas southern border to see these dynamics up close and learn from the experts on the ground.

The distinguished Presiding Officer comes from a border State. I must say, my impression is that for many people who don't live in a border State or have the experience we have as border State Senators, most of what they think they know about the border they have learned in the movies or by reading novels; in other words, it is not reality. That is why it is so important to go to the border.

As I mentioned, in January, a bipartisan group of seven of our colleagues joined me in El Paso and then Yuma. But in El Paso, a place where President Biden finally visited the day before we got there, the circumstances were so severe that migrants were sleeping on city sidewalks in freezing temperatures because shelters were at capacity. They have been overwhelmed like everything else on the border. My colleagues were able to see for themselves the impact of this crisis on law enforcement and on the nonprofit organizations like Catholic Charities and others, which were trying to help these migrants in very difficult circumstances.

It was a busy and productive trip. But I am eager to return this evening to the Texas southern border with another group of colleagues. Senator THUNE from South Dakota, Senator WICKER from Mississippi, Senators FISHER and RICKETTS from Nebraska, and Senator BRITT from Alabama will join me for a series of tours and meetings in the Rio Grande Valley starting this evening. We will receive a tour of the border from some of the dedicated law enforcement officials who protect it. We will get an up-close look at one of the Border Patrol's processing centers and learn more about the challenges they are facing due to the sheer volume of migrants crossing the border every day.

One reason for this increased volume is not because of increased poverty or violence in communities in Mexico or Central America; it is because of what the Border Patrol calls the pool factors—that is, the impression that you can come to America's doorstep, and you can make your way into the United States and live the rest of your life because there are no consequences to coming to the United States outside of a legal, orderly, humane process. That is why we are seeing this unprecedented border crisis as a result of those policies and that perception, which is reality.

We will talk to local law enforcement officials as well—the sheriffs—and the private land owners on how this flood of humanity is impacting their communities. We will receive briefings from Federal, State, and local law enforcement about efforts to secure the border.

We had Attorney General Garland testify in front of the Judiciary Committee yesterday, and we asked him about the 108,000 Americans who died as a result of overdoses from drugs that come across the southwestern border. He said: Well, we are doing everything we can. Then eventually he said: Well, we need more money. Then he said: Well, this isn't really my job. He said that is the job of the Department of Homeland Security. In other words, he was passing the buck. Meanwhile, the flood of humanity continues, and the flood of deadly drugs continues as well.

It is important that as many Senators as possible see and understand

the dynamics of what has happened. If we are going to have a shot at fixing this mess, which can only happen on a bipartisan basis, then everyone needs to know what we are up against.

I appreciate my colleagues—these colleagues, as well as other colleagues—who have taken the time to visit the border and learn from the people who know it best. They are the true experts. I am grateful for everything they do to promote the security and prosperity of our border communities.

I am especially thankful that they take the time to share their perspective with our other Senate colleagues so we can work together to, hopefully, finally address this crisis.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. President, on another matter, today is Texas Independence Day, a day for Texans to celebrate our unique history and honor the brave men and women who shaped it.

It was 187 years ago, on March 2, 1836, that Texas adopted its Declaration of Independence from Mexico. If you read that Declaration of Independence of 1836, it bears a lot of similarities to what our Founding Fathers declared when they declared their independence from England.

But independence from Mexico happened in the context of the struggle that is perhaps best remembered by the Battle of the Alamo, which laid some of the groundwork for eventual victory. One courageous defender of the Alamo was a man named William Barret Travis, a lieutenant colonel in the Texas army. During the battle, his fellow soldiers were outnumbered 10 to 1—10 to 1—by the forces of Mexican dictator Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna.

On February 24 of that year, with his position under siege, Lieutenant Colonel Travis wrote a letter pleading for reinforcements, and I would like to read it. It was addressed “To the People of Texas & All Americans in the World.”

Fellow Citizens & compatriots—

I am besieged, by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna—I have sustained a continual Bombardment & cannonade for 24 hours & have not lost a man—The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken—I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls—I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch—The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily & will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor & that of his country—Victory or Death.

Signed by William Barret Travis.

Well, the Travis letter is one of the most treasured documents in Texas history, and it lays bare the ideals and character of the people who founded our State, people characterized by their courage, by their sacrifice, by